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# THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

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## PROJECT-RESEARCH A SURVEY OF RACE RELATIONS IN A NORTHERN TOWN

Arthur Katona

In collaboration with Valois Finley and Emma Hickox

### Introduction

In a previous paper I stated that sociology begins at home, i.e., the family, neighborhood, community.<sup>1</sup> The same applies to research, as this report on a piece of what I choose to call project-research tries to show.

The stuff of sociology is to be found in people and their behavior. This statement is obvious enough and every sociologist no doubt agrees to it. But after duly paying lip service, we make books and papers the stuff of sociology, not human beings and what they do. And seldom do we provide connecting links between the books and the people they deal with.

To put it bluntly, we tend to study verbalisms, not people. We take stiff workouts in semantic exercises and in time become hardened logomachists. We are supposed to be educators but if we

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Katona, "The Teaching of Sociology in a Democracy," *American Sociological Review*, August, 1943, pp. 439-49.

should search into our souls we must confess that we are not doing much to solve that most urgent of educational problems, namely, the divorce of school and society. Sociologists, who in increasing measure take over the human world as their bailiwick (to the consternation of other social scientists), are in a strategic position to attack the problem.

That little has been done by us on the problem is a fact of which our students are not unaware. The great mass of students accept the academic *status quo* with cynical passivity, get by with a minimum amount of effort, and seek interest-absorbing activities elsewhere, while we wonder why they do not get excited about courses of study. A few become disturbed about the situation and occasionally speak out against it.<sup>8</sup>

Progressive educators offer the project as the way out of our educational impasse.<sup>9</sup> Now, by no means is it believed in the present report that this way out is the whole story; it is believed that the project method can be used to great educational advantage on the college level and that it is one of the *musts* on any program intending to vitalize college education. In the current to-do about post-war education plenty of words are being flung around on this problem of "vitalization." It is not clear what actually will be done about it.

Originality is not claimed for the type of endeavor reported here. It is given the name "*project-research*" because it is an active study

<sup>8</sup> In the *Ohio University Post*, October 30, 1945, under the heading "What Ohio University Needs" appears the following item: "Sociology student Emmy Hickox stated that the greatest need of that department was the opportunity for students to turn the theories of the department into practice by doing field or social work." The student apparently referred to a general situation since among the sociology majors those specializing in family case work get some field work in their senior year.

The following predicament, typical alas, was confided to me by a senior sociology major: Here she was about to graduate, without any sort of realistic preparation for the social service work she planned to do. All her sociology courses were book courses. The poor girl, keenly conscious of her lack of training in personal and group contacts, was appalled at the prospect of dealing with people in need.

<sup>9</sup> See the writings of John Dewey, John L. Childs, Charles H. Judd, William H. Kilpatrick, Lloyd Allen Cook, *et al.*

of a life-situation at home and at the same time it can stand up as research in its own right, albeit lacking the elaborate sophistication of research on a large scale. It is offered respectfully as an illustration of the maxim that there is a world of interesting study right under one's nose—why go to distant places?—and it is hoped that it may help induce others to embark on similar undertakings.

### The Project

Initial prompting of our project-research certainly came from "real life." A highly esteemed colored student had been refused food at a local eating place. We were quite concerned. What sort of town was this anyway? Did all restaurants do this? How many eating places, if any, would serve Negroes? Under what conditions? Was the law being violated?

Two students of the race-relations class undertook to find out. Accordingly a questionnaire was drawn up to be used with personal interviews. So, questionnaire in handbag, the students set out to call on every eating house in town. The questionnaire was made out with both eyes on that well-known principle of questionnaire-making much honored in the breach, namely, that the questions be clear, brief, and few in number. A copy of the relevant state law was added. The questions were:

Do you serve Negroes?

Do you serve Negroes if they're with white people?

Do you allow Negroes to eat somewhere in your establishment?

If you don't serve Negroes, would you if the other restaurants did?

If you don't serve Negroes, why?

Do you know the law which reads "Whoever, being the proprietor or his employee, keeper or manager of an inn, restaurant, eating-house, public conveyance by land or by water, theater or other place of public accommodation and amusement, denies a citizen, except for reasonable application alike to all citizens and regardless of color or race, the full enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities or privileges thereof, or, being a person who aids or incites the denial thereof, shall

be fined not less than fifty dollars nor more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned not less than thirty days nor more than ninety days, or both?"

Here are the high lights of twenty-four interview cases. For obvious reasons identities cannot be divulged.

Case 1. The owner apparently had got word of the fact that some sort of an investigation was forthcoming. He had consulted a lawyer and simply would not answer the prepared questions. He seemed nervous, didn't want to talk at all, and made pretenses of serving customers.

When he did talk, he appeared fully aware of the law. He let it be known that a colored employee ate in the kitchen. He asked heatedly, "What will vets say after the war if they see niggers eating here?" He condescended to say, "If you can get everybody else in town to serve them, I'd be obliged to keep my business." And he added confidently, "But I doubt if you can get the others to do it."

Case 2. The proprietor acted like a friendly host and talked quite agreeably. Without hesitation he answered "yes" to the questions. (His turned out to be the only restaurant willing to serve colored people without reservation.) He put the matter thus: "White men make the laws and if they don't want to eat with colored folks, they can change the laws."

Case 3. This restaurant was located in a residential neighborhood where several colored maids worked during the day. The proprietress said that occasionally Negro maids came in and she served them. But serving other Negroes was a different matter. "I only get a few maids from high-class homes around here and the neighborhood expects me to feed them. As long as it stays that way it's O.K. with me."

Case 4. The owner walked away from the interviewers. Not to be daunted, the students pressed him for answers. Finally they cornered him in the rear and abruptly he rasped out that he could make no statement, but he continued rasping in this wise: "You're just stirring up trouble, that's what you're doing. There's no problem at all. Sure I feed niggers. I don't see why you're doing this investigation. The state law won't let anybody refuse to serve people. Isn't that plain enough?" Dubious about the man's expostulations, the students checked up on them. They found no evidence whatever that he had served or was willing to serve Negroes.

Case 5. Acting on the belief that this was a very high-class spot the interviewers with all due respect made an appointment by telephone. They arrived to find an unkempt saloon reeking of stale bread and beer. The owner talked willingly, obviously impressed by the visit. He feared the law and constantly referred to it in apprehensive tones as though it were a club poised over his head.

"Yes, I serve niggers. I'm scared to turn them down. But I'd get rid of the niggers if I could. Even when I raise prices on them I get into trouble." During subsequent interviews the students heard several restaurant owners make surprisingly similar remarks about the place. "Send the niggers to ———; he'd serve them. Let ——— do it." Apparently, then, the man was "taking the rap." Why? Rumor, it was later discovered, had it that the saloon was a gambling place. It was alleged that other proprietors knew about it and in effect blackmailed the owner.

Case 6. The master of this hole in the wall was an affable chap who talked at length and quite pleasantly. The upshot of his remarks was that he had very few Negro customers and did serve them. He did so, it seemed, as a special favor to these few, not as a service to customers irrespective of race. Serving strange Negroes would be a different story.

Case 7. Without hesitation the proprietress filled out the questionnaire with emphatic *noes*. Horror-stricken at the idea of serving Negroes, she exclaimed, "Why, my class of trade wouldn't stand for it! There'd be a riot if I ever tried to serve a Negro here."

Like practically every other restaurateur she was fully aware of the law. Observation showed that the "high-class trade" ranged all the way from grime-streaked miners and overalled farmers to "dressed-up" traveling men.

Case 8. The interviewers came back again and again before the owners, a married couple, would talk. They repeatedly pretended that they were too busy. "Too busy" meant two customers in the place.

At last when the restaurant was empty the wife of the owner talked, and said plenty. On one occasion she tried to get the police to throw a "nigger" out. The police came and said all she could do was raise the price of "coke." She did—charged fifty cents for a five-cent bottle—but the "damn nigger stayed and paid." "No, we don't cater to that kind of trade."

Case 9. The grapevine had reached here well in advance of the interviewers. No one, manager or hired help, was willing to talk. The mana-

ger hustled about all the while, trying to dodge the two students. When they cornered him he retreated quickly to the rear and whispered to a girl. "Don't wait on them." A vain half-hour was spent lingering around in the hope that the manager would show his head. No interview.

Case 10. The bistro's owner said he knew about the law; he was caught up by it a few years ago. Just the same he did not cater to "niggers." Added he: "Only one place in town feeds niggers; that's ——'s place." (As previously pointed out, this was said by several proprietors.)

Case 11. Politely but firmly the manager refused to answer or fill out the questionnaire. "Because of my business," he said, "I couldn't answer the questions."

Case 12. Puffing himself with pride the proprietor recited at length that when Cab Calloway and his band came to town he served them in their bus, that Negroes could buy lunches from him and take them out, that a Negro had been eating regularly in the back room. But as for serving Negroes in the regular dining hall, that could not be done.

Case 13. The owner of this prominent restaurant would not answer the specific questions but after being assured that his name would not be used, he spoke up. "As far as I'm concerned, I wouldn't serve a nigger. —— seems to want their trade and that's O.K. with me. If anyone else wants to feed them, that's all right with me too. But I'm not going to."

Case 14. The proprietor yelled out *noes* to the questions and then threw these ejaculations at the interviewers. "Are you Jewish? No? Then you're communists! . . . If you're not Jews, that doesn't make any difference. The Jews are behind this whole movement. . . . I know, you're college students and you're indoctrinated with all these isms. But I'm not. . . . I don't see how any white person would stick up for a nigger. . . . Listen, would you sleep with a nigger?"

He ranted on and on. He could not see why the survey was being made and asked why the students did not make a survey of the whole town because the town really set the policy of the restaurants. [He had something there.] He pointed out in apparent self-justification that once when a group of Army officers came in to eat, there was a "nigger" among them and he refused to serve the "nigger," and they all left.

Case 15. "I'm surprised that you two girls are taking up with niggers," exploded the owner between tobacco spits. He looked like a character out of *Tobacco Road* and, like his eating house, he smelled of grease. "I just wouldn't feed niggers, that's all. Would you want to sit with



niggers? Would you drink after niggers? Niggers are like mules. They'll get even with yuh, kick yuh, if they have to wait ten years."

Case 16. A very well-educated woman ran the place and she talked fully and frankly. Only when basketball teams came to town did she let Negroes eat in her establishment and then of course with the teams. "Under no circumstances would I serve them otherwise; I wouldn't want to mix them up with white people. Niggers simply don't know their place. Believe me, if they did come in, I'd put the prices up so high that they couldn't afford to eat here. Once, though, a well-to-do white family ate in the dining room and they had a colored chauffeur. I did serve him in the kitchen."

Case 17. It looked at first as though the proprietor were going to throw out the interviewers. He glared and gestured ferociously as he barked out *noes* to the inquiries. And he fired these parting shots: "Niggers don't come back the second time to my place! The high-class nigger knows his place; the riff-raff don't!"

Case 18. Very sweet and polite was the woman manager from the South. In soft cordial tones she revealed the paternalistic attitudes characteristic of the "kindly" southerner. In her own estimation she treated Negroes fairly and generously. "I give them a sandwich to take out and I don't charge them for coffee cups . . . I'm from the South. We don't eat with Negroes. I don't understand how we could do it."

Case 19. The man quite agreeably took time out to talk. *No* was his answer to the questions. He gave the reason that, after all, he was only the manager and had to stick to the policy of the restaurant.

Case 20. After answering with emphatic *noes*, the boss of the rank-smelling little beanery remarked, "Few if any niggers come in because we draw only the best trade."

Case 21. The proprietor would not serve Negroes because, he said, "It would hurt my business if I did. White people just won't eat with niggers."

Case 22. Priding himself on his intellectuality the suave manager "explained" his position in an hour and a half of supersmooth evasion. A gentle-spoken casuist, he put on a show of soft-soaping that was almost a work of art. He seemed to love the words and phrases he fashioned and beamed at the apparent effects they were producing. He intoned, mildly and patronizingly, that the interviewers were very nice and well-intentioned but, after they grew up, they would come to see that



nothing could be done about the race problem. Negroes simply would not be comfortable in his dining hall, "don't you know." And he expounded in unctuous detail the many subtle ways by which he could ease Negroes out should they come in. "However," he condescended, "if one of *you* should come in with a colored companion, I'd be willing to serve you both."

Case 23. The owner refused to answer the questions but expressed himself in off-the-record remarks to the effect that he would rather feed any "nigger" than some whites. He added that he had served Negroes in the past, but did not state why he apparently was not serving them now.

Case 24. This proprietor was quite sociable and talkative. Yes, he served Negroes—tourists, athletes, and others passing through town. He went on to say, however, that once when a colored student asked to buy a meal ticket, he did not sell him one. He advised the boy that he would not be happy eating there. "Really, I had nothing against the fellow." But he took Negroes only in traveling groups such as track teams and tourist families.

### Conclusions

#### 1. Immediate findings. Out of the line-up of eating houses:

Only one served Negroes without reservation

One dodged the interview completely, the manager disappearing to the rear of the store.

One refused to answer the questions.

One refused to answer the questions but indicated willingness to serve if others did.

One probably answered *yeses* falsely, as indicated by a checkup.

One served Negroes under duress and would not serve them otherwise.

One gave Negroes food to take out.

One allowed Negroes to eat in the rear and to take food out.

Two served Negroes if accompanied by whites; in one case provided the colored persons were members of athletic teams, in the other case if the colored person were a companion of one of the interviewers.

Three fed restricted groups of Negroes, to wit: maids, athletic teams, and tourist families, "select" well-known patrons.

Eleven did not serve Negroes at all. Of these, five would not serve even if other restaurants did, and one had colored help eating in the kitchen. Stated reasons for not serving were:

What will vets say after the war if niggers eat here?

My class of trade wouldn't stand for it.

We draw only the best trade.

It would hurt my business.

We don't cater to that kind of trade. (Two said this.)

It's the policy of this place.

I just wouldn't serve niggers! (Four said this or something almost like it.)

Eleven would serve if the others did.

2. Wider implications. The survey, limited though it is, indicates that:

A caste system operates in the North as in the South.

Lawbreaking is an integral part of the American ethos, i.e., breaking the law and getting away with it is a good old American custom.

Laws making for interracial democracy are not enforced.

However, laws and their enforcement would be an effective factor in achieving interracial democracy.<sup>4</sup> (The great majority of restaurants were apprehensive of the law and were violating it only because they could "get away with it." It must be remembered that only five eating places stated that they would not serve Negroes even if the rest did.)

Contrary to Gunnar Myrdal, there is no "American Dilemma."<sup>5</sup> Americans are not caught, conscience-stricken, between professed ideals and actual practices. They aim to "keep the nigger in his

<sup>4</sup> See Carey McWilliams, *Brothers Under the Skin* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1943), Chapter IX. Also his paper "Race Discrimination and the Law," *Science and Society*, winter, 1945, pp. 1-22. This paper disposes of the sociological fatalism that has bogged down our thinking and acting in regard to the mores. It takes at times a nonsociologist to show up fallacies in sociological thought.

<sup>5</sup> See Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 2 vols.

place—so what?" The task of social engineers here is not to resolve a dilemma but to replace one set of attitudes and practices by another.

3. Research implications. Our project-research points out that: Research begins at home. There's a world of research topics "hot" or "cold" right under the student's nose.

A research project simply and directly drawn up and limited in scope may offer valuable findings in its own right and provide implications far beyond its immediate field.

The event or situation of the moment may furnish a lead for lively, exciting, and valuable research.

An interview or questionnaire of very few questions briefly and clearly put and timed and phrased to meet a purpose may not only bring in immediate answers but much more relevant information as well.

Questions may be used as leads or blinds not only to get answer-information, but to get reactions that reveal ideas, emotions, and attitudes sought by the investigator.<sup>6</sup>

In certain interview-surveys of attitudes, youthful, "naïve" investigators may be much more successful in drawing out attitudes than older, sophisticated ones since the persons interviewed are more likely to vent their feelings on and lecture the "misguided" youngsters who presume to inquire into things that be.

Even a limited and local research project may throw light on theories and findings of the "big shots" in social thought and research, e.g., Gunnar Myrdal as noted above.

Literary (colorful) description—the high-light section above—may report attitudes more truly than the customary bare facts and figures. Here writers and artists may be more accurate than research workers. Research reports may well contain sections similar

<sup>6</sup> In another connection Arnold M. Rose has shown how the well-trained interviewer may so guide the interview as to elicit information almost impossible to get in a direct manner: "A Research Note on Experimentation in Interviewing," *American Journal of Sociology*, September, 1945, pp. 143-44.

to the high lights just mentioned. For in such descriptions the flavor of an attitude—the real attitude—may be given and degrees of *yes* and *no* revealed. Conventional research too often has treated *yesses* and *noes* as absolutes; in its cold numerical listings it perpetuates the mistake of “it’s gotta be this or that.”

4. Educational implications. It is suggested that:

A project of this kind gives a student experience in actual research, takes him into the real world around him, and makes a course of study come to life.

It furnishes what might be called contact-experience as initial preparation for social-service work.

It provides future research workers preliminary training on the job.

It may help “decompartmentalize” the social sciences now too much separated by departmental organization and practice. Here in this project we have—in addition to the sociological—economic, governmental, historical, psychological angles.

It ties together school and community. The course of study is brought out into the surrounding area of social living; it becomes socially integrated; and as broader implications impel it further it is carried into regional, national, and international areas. The student begins to sense the Great Society, this One World, of ours.

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## WARD'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES

C. S. Mihanovich

### Definition of Education

Ward realized that the ordinary word "education" was very inadequate to convey his full meaning because it had been used to imply so many different concepts in the past. He tried to construct his own definition:<sup>1</sup>

To him education was: "Universal distribution of extant knowledge."

Education . . . may therefore be defined as a system for extending to all the members of society such of the extant knowledge of the world as may be deemed most important.

But the knowledge referred to is just that which is embraced in the word *science*, and the diffusion of it is the process which goes by the name of *education*.

If by the term *education* there can be constantly implied the two adjuncts, scientific and popular; if the word can be made to embrace the notion of imparting a knowledge of the materials and forces of nature to all the members of society, there can be no objection to the employment of this word *education* as the embodiment of all that is progressive.

Education thus defined is the available means of setting progressive wheels of society in motion; it is, as it were, the lever to which the power must be applied.

He consequently opposed the notion that education means a drawing out, for before anything can be drawn out something must be put in. Education to Ward meant knowledge of the already known.

### Kinds of Education

Ward classifies the prevailing ideas of education very roughly under the following headings:

1. Education of experience
2. Education of discipline

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this article, reference may be made to Lester F. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology* (2d ed.; New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1897), 2 vols.

3. Education of culture
4. Education of research
5. Education of information

The *education of experience* has been thought by many educators to be all that is necessary. Ward considered wasteful the trial-and-error method which it employs. Success, in this method, if it comes at all, may come too late.

Experience is costly. Admittedly it furnishes knowledge, but he believed that there could be a substitute for experience which in many cases would greatly shorten the way to the goal of success. Education by experience has always been slow and barren. In its place he proposes the teleological method which is economical of effort and time.

In discussing the *education of discipline*, "It either means," Ward writes, "the modification of brain tissue or it means the supply of the mind with the data of thought." He states that no appreciable quantity or quality of the psychic substratum can be affected within the limits of an individual's lifetime. The advocates of the education of discipline would deny that it means the supply of the mind with the data of thought. Although there is a line between physiology and psychology, yet the latter has its roots in the former. Quoting Ward, "All mental action is the product of physiological action that renders real brain-development possible." Discipline can only be obtained by organizing mental states through systematic knowledge which shall give rise to useful action. Discipline and character which involve morality are implied in his definition of the education of information. These ends will take care of themselves, as in the case of many others, once the means have been put into operation.

The *education of culture* aims to supply the mind with something of no practical value. It purports to teach one to be graceful, pleasing, and fashionable. This type of education is "very desirable but not necessary."

In analyzing the *education of research* Ward contends that those



who maintain that truth, once originated, will naturally diffuse itself are not revealing the facts.

Ward contends that society is not as yet so educated as to receive new truths adequately. It can only be made receptive to new knowledge when the extant knowledge has been distributed and is in the possession of all; in other words, has been utilized. But now it is secreted in the minds of a few or in libraries. Thus the few dominate the many, or, in some cases, the many ostracize and persecute the few because of ignorance and fear of what others possess. The evils of society cannot be cured by further research at this point or by the origination of more unassimilable knowledge.

The *education of information*, which Ward always defended, first proceeds artificially and teleologically to confer knowledge; second, it pays no special attention to the information of intellectual faculties or of character, assuming that these must necessarily follow from the possession of knowledge; third, it makes the education of the ornamental secondary, and of the useful primary, in that it promulgates a knowledge of the most practical truths of nature and life followed by principles; fourth, it leaves research to follow as a matter of necessity, by devoting the education of information "exclusively to imparting existing knowledge to those who do not possess it."

Education, then, is a system by which the most important extant knowledge of the world shall be extended to all its members. It aims to store the mind with a careful organization of the most useful and important known truths. Ward believed that there is a fallacy in the idea that the brain can be overcrammed, overtasked, and worn out by knowledge. The damage that is done is from ill-assorted knowledge which is always distasteful and repugnant. The leading-out process often does this sort of damage. There is a spontaneous craving for the right sort of knowledge which can easily be aroused. "The normal mind is hungry for truth, and, when fed with it, it devours it with a relish and digests it without effort." Only ignorance



has prevented education from proceeding in the right way. Broad comprehensive principles always appeal to the youthful mind. It is overwork due to bad teaching and to badly arranged textbooks that wearies and dulls the interest of pupils. It is detail, unrelated particulars, repetition that develops repulsion. Interest should be the keynote to all teaching. Youth is always asking why and what for and teachers and textbooks should satisfy these inquiries. Education, then, is a system based on the principle that it shall devote itself exclusively to the contents of the mind and disregard entirely its capacity. This is the first cardinal principle upon which Ward's system of education rests.

#### Education a Social Function

His second cardinal principle is that education shall be the exclusive work of society, and this, in our social organization, means the government. Education must be the task of the state. "In common parlance, then, education must be exclusively intrusted to the state, and can never be adopted until the state is ready to adopt it." Ward is able to see many of the objections to state education, but he says there is no justifiable alternative in view. He states that government always administers better than it legislates, the reason being that there is more time for ample deliberation. *Laissez faire* and competition are always wasteful. They "represent the wasteful, genetic method." In any enterprise the state has undertaken, he maintains, it has done better than have private enterprises judged from the welfare of society and not private gain. Private organizations have not let the truth be known, and consequently public opinion is based on error which has been encouraged by those interested. On the other hand, whatever scientific undertakings have been entrusted to the government have almost invariably been ably and thoroughly prosecuted. When the public is imbued with the principles of universal knowledge, the government will be an ever better realm for the work of scientific men who

are always more or less "peculiarly adapted to faithful service in situations where great practical interests are involved." But "science is ill-adapted for the competition and feverish methods and sentiments that obtain in nearly all departments of private life. Success in science depends upon the ability to await results. Science cannot be hurried." The same is true for education because, furthermore, "Education is essentially scientific labor, and this in the highest sense. It is not only the science of sciences, but the art of arts." Furthermore, the competitive system is not adapted to education inasmuch as "there exists no natural desire for education." Those who are to be educated have no natural craving for it. Education is not subject to laws of supply and demand.

The system of private education, all things considered, is not only a very bad one, but, properly viewed, it is absolutely worse than none, since it tends still further to increase the inequality in the existing intelligence, which is a worse evil than a generally lower state of intelligence would be. The redeeming feature, therefore, is that under its operation very little knowledge can be conferred. The less society has of it the better, and therefore its very inefficiency must be set down as a blessing.

Society, on the other hand, "desires what is really needed. The object of education is social improvement." This cannot be fully attained if society must carry a large uneducated class. To do this is most expensive, because from these classes progress never ensues. For the sake of the pupil himself state education is better. Rank, under state education, is accorded to ability and not to birth or station. In a democracy the contacts with high and low are of inestimable importance and benefit. Each finds his own level. Success comes to him with power.

Once more, state education is far better for the pupil. It is distinguished fundamentally from private education in dealing with all in a strictly impartial manner. The lowest *gamin* of the streets here meets the most pampered son of opulence on a footing of strict equality. Nothing counts but merit itself. Pupils take their places according to what they are, not

what they are called. Public education operates as a gauge of the capacities of the mind. Each mind is, as it were, measured and its capacity recorded.

Furthermore, state education is infinitely better for society. It diffuses knowledge which cannot be left to parents or individuals. "It is not for any of these to say what knowledge is most useful to society." When society realizes the impetus given to progress through the teleological method it will esteem the distribution of knowledge as its one great function. All its efforts will be directed toward this initial means and dynamic opinion; dynamic action and progress will follow. Discipline, culture, and origination as they arise should take second place after the distribution of knowledge.

The third cardinal principle of Ward's system is that education must be universal. "The knowledge which society requires to be extended to one it must require to be extended to all." A more progressive civilization will result from a better educational system. The differences among peoples are largely in what they know, that is, differences in achievement. Lack of opportunity and education greatly increase the criminal and dependent submerged classes. Ignorance in the midst of intelligence is worse than a generally low state of intelligence. The crude drag down the refined. Each is a danger to the other. Progress is neutralized. One group tends to encroach upon the other to the detriment of the whole. "The end of life is enjoyment, not intelligence. The latter is only the means to the end."

Attempts of socialists and others, according to Ward, are to attain progress and happiness directly without utilizing the necessary means. Hence failure is certain. Capital and labor have become symbols of intelligence and ignorance, and will continue to be so long as inequalities of education persist. Ward replies to those who claim that the inequality in natural capacity is so great that, even with the distribution of knowledge, inequalities would exist and that it would result in one inequality being substituted for another.

First, he says, even though differences in native capacity may be great they are small compared to the differences of information. Common sense exists in every class. There are all grades in intellect to be sure, but those who fall below a certain average standard are few as well as those who rise above it. "The great bulk of humanity are fully witted, and amply capable of taking care of themselves if afforded an opportunity." Those who succeed often do so not because of superior intellect, but because of emotional force, great ambition, and perseverance and will. But the "really best minds are not the ones that accomplish most . . . the best minds require to have opportunity brought to them." The best minds are often too critical, too conscious, and too sensitive to defects and often lack the emotion and ambition that so often accompany average talents. If true merit is to be developed where latent, opportunity must be equalized. Society will then profit by all the intellect it possesses. While mediocrity is usual and brilliancy the exception, the "real need is to devise the means necessary to render mediocrity such as it is, more comfortable." The differences which now exist are largely due to artificial differences and only slightly to intellect. Secondly, Ward replies, that although differences would exist, if knowledge were universally distributed, practically no harm would follow. Differences would be wholly due to merit and not to accident or chance.

The economic gap which now exists between different classes in our population due to ignorance is the worst obstacle and evil we have. The great number must serve the powerful few. Power is always used for self-aggrandizement. Power can only be equalized when advantages are more equalized. The few mold and direct public opinion as they please through control of the organs of public opinion.

The resources of society hidden in men and women without opportunity Ward likens to the mineral resources which lie hidden in the world. It needs universal education to discover them.

To Ward, universal education means compulsory education. Nevertheless, he sees no obstacles in its way. All classes of people, if the appropriate means are used, may be attracted rather than coerced to education. This can be accomplished by what he terms attractive legislation. Parents and guardians should be induced to patronize the public school. No one knows what progress might result from the utilization of the intellect now latent in society.

. . . the thoughtful observer is led to reflect upon the probability that there exist throughout society minds fully capable of matching the most brilliant examples which the race has produced, but which, for want of opportunity, never shed a single ray of light from the fire that smoulders within them . . . But talent cannot be created artificially, while opportunities, to a great extent, can be so created.

Ward noted that the mother of circumstances is knowledge that certain fields of knowledge exist. Without this knowledge talent cannot find its own realm of activity. In his system of universal education, Ward, of course, meant to include women and all races. He felt that such education could be defended on its own merits, to say nothing of the effect the release of latent intellect might have on the progress of men and women and ultimately on society. The reason, he believed, that women in realms of so-called men's work have achieved so little is lack of opportunity. Such faculties as they have possessed have been starving because of poor mental food. He felt that men would have had a similar record if they had been reared under the same circumstances and socially deprived all along the way. He considered that the minds of women differ from those of men only in emotional quality, but that intellect is one and the same everywhere. Education, then, Ward reiterates, is to be conferred upon everybody. The only limitation is mental capacity.

Recognizing the fact that there exist all grades of native capacity for receiving education, it must be admitted that there exists a minimum limit to the degree of intellectual power which would repay the attempt to impart information. Below this lies the class which, while still differing

from one another, must, for all practical purposes, be regarded as idiots. But, while these gradations are to be found when searched for, it must not be supposed that there is any corresponding numerical gradation. These cases of undeveloped intellect are the mere exceptions, and must be regarded as in a certain sense abnormalities, or monstrosities. The fact that this class does not admit of education does not affect the other fact that the great mass of mankind does admit of it. It cannot be concluded, because many human beings are so sunk in ignorance as to appear almost idiotic, that such are incapable of receiving information, on the contrary, there is no knowing what powers may be made to spring forth from such repulsive sources. There is such a thing as *latent intellect*.

Ward does not believe that opposition to compulsory education is deep-seated and widespread.

It is only a few even now who, without compulsion, are absolutely unwilling to patronize the public schools, such as they are. Those who believe in education at all—and most men have some idea of its value, though they may at first object, as they would to any change—soon come to see the personal advantage which it secures to themselves. Aside from the feeling that they ought to derive some benefit from the taxes they have to pay, they soon perceive that they are exempted from the payment of private tuition. Thus the dictates of pecuniary interest, the most powerful of all influences, tend to diminish the original aversion to public instruction. The few who object on the ground of conscientious religious scruples, considering the entirely secular character of state education, are not sufficiently numerous to command respect. The only remaining class is the poor and ignorant, who know nothing of education or its value. This class is large it is true, but it is for their more especial benefit that state education should be established. To allow these to have a voice in the matter would be suicidal to the whole scheme. They are the true game of education. . . . The great superiority of state over private education, from this point of view, is, that it can compel this class to become educated. Unless it does this, it can scarcely be said to have established its right to exist. . . . Instead of being compelled to patronize the public schools, parents and guardians should be induced to do so. Even the lowest classes are capable of being thus attracted, and nothing should be left undone to secure this consummation.



### Matter of Education

Although Ward did not propose to write on pedagogy, he nevertheless did make a few pedagogical suggestions.

To say that a proper system of education should confer the maximum amount of the most important extant knowledge upon all the members of society, leaves the question still open as to what constitutes the most important extant knowledge, as well as the question how much the maximum amount is.

He does not attempt to give a detailed answer to these questions. He believed that the most important knowledge is guided by two principles; first, generality, second, practicality. The general is not the abstract, which is difficult to grasp. It deals with phenomena and is concrete. To acquire the general facts of science no higher intellectual powers are required than are used in ordinary everyday life.

As regards practicality, Ward is careful not to confuse it with technical knowledge.

The education of information deals wholly with knowledge of things (objects, phenomena, laws), not with knowledge of ways of doing things, which is the subject of technological and artistic education.

He suggested three distinct educational curricula:

... the *first* to be strictly universal and invariable and to be restricted to such general and practical knowledge, within the certain comprehension of all intellects, as is clearly of the highest value to all without any distinction whatever.

The *second curriculum*, while dealing in the main with truths of greater depths and difficultness, should also adhere to the principle of greatest generality and practicality.

The *third curriculum* should be adapted only for those who have successfully passed the first and second. This must be, to a large extent, elective by the student, who is supposed to have attained a sufficient age and judgment to decide, with the aid and advice of the teacher, which



advanced studies will be best adapted to his life-pursuits. It should embrace truths of greater speciality and detail, as pointing to some one great class of practical labor or another, to be undertaken after the preparation shall have been completed which it should be the object of education to furnish.

There should be one ruling principle of classification. "Everything that has been known by man should be made known to all men." This naturally implies primarily general laws and not every object, fact, or detail of nature.

The primary curriculum should deal with the widest generalizations progressively diminishing in generality; the secondary simply continues the reduction of this generality and leaves the teacher to judge at what point certain coordinate branches of the system are to be dropped and more attention paid to others, and which ones these shall be; the third curriculum still further continues these processes of specialization and election for special ends.

The teacher will see that concrete data precede generalization and induction. Abstraction should be taught last, not first. Those who wish to pursue branches not included in these curricula should be allowed to do so after the three curricula are completed.

No danger from inequality of intelligence could then result since it is not special and technical knowledge, but general and practical knowledge that chiefly confer intelligence and power upon man.

Origination of knowledge and technical education would be merely "differentia of the general truths already obtained."

Ward seems to have anticipated the intelligence tests and careful education records of our time. He stated that one of "the most important objects of education . . . should be to determine the natural characteristics of individual minds." He believed the output of human progress could be doubled with no more energy expended if each person could find early the work he is best fitted to perform. He says education should be conducted on scientific principles, which implies a record of observations and performance. The mental aptitudes of students vary. These variations should be

observed and recorded so that the individual may be advised about what he is best adapted to. He believed that a fairly safe guide could be instituted if this work were systematically and regularly carried on. School records should be carefully kept with a view to this object. The teacher should determine "which branches of the second curriculum should be omitted and which pursued, the teacher being in turn absolutely confined to the data furnished by the record."

Ward does not go into detail about the subjects which should be included in the curricula. It is clearly evident that he personally loved languages. By literature Ward appears to have meant to include all writings of descriptive, explanatory, or interpretative nature. Concerning language, Ward believed it had been demonstrated that a thorough acquaintance with the Greek and Roman classics was not essential to a good education nor even to a perfect command of a modern tongue. Since the great object of the education of information is utility, time must not be wasted on nonessentials. Such matters may be left for personal study and investigation after school life is over. Nevertheless language studied in relation to philology should form a part of the universal curriculum. Studied in this manner it has great value for anthropology and for history. In the teaching of grammar, Ward believed that a synthetic view of this subject, or what he called the code of laws of the language, should be taught. He looked forward to the time when the world would adopt a universal rational language. Physiology and anatomy and hygiene should be a part of the instruction for both sexes. Matters pertaining to marriage and the home should also be taught. He considered the subject of history very important. Yet history as taught in the schools of his time, he thought, did not train the judgment. It only strengthened the memory. Although Ward believed that ethics should be a part of public education he did not believe in the direct teaching of morals. The teaching of morals as such sometimes tends to diminish them. He believed that wisdom made morality.

### Means of Education

To Ward the tools of education were reading, writing, and calculating.

The several means of acquiring education constitute so many true arts, and, in so far as education is devoted to inculcating them, it is simply teaching art and not science. . . .

The chief means of education are the arts of reading, writing, and calculating. . . .

As true means of education, however, these kindred arts must be duly recognized and with them the necessity of devoting as much time to their acquirement as is necessary for their ready use in the work for which they are designed.

When we speak of education, therefore, and name its matter, it must be understood that in this is necessarily embraced the means of obtaining it.

### Methods of Education

With regard to methods of education and teacher training, Ward says that teachers and methods of instruction have usually been as good as the demand. While Ward believed that the student should become a thorough master of the particular field which he eventually chooses, he was very much averse to constant drill and study on particulars. All special methods must follow one general method, that of the teleological. This departure formulates the education of information, and distinguishes it from the education of experience. He had no patience with those who advocate the *method of nature* or what he termed the genetic method. He believed to convert "education into a sort of social ontogenesis is false in principle, and is not supported by any proper interpretation of the teachings of science."

He was much in favor of pictorial literature and would recommend that a work including copies of all the great art productions of the world should be compiled with explanatory material and made available to all persons.

Although Ward would not limit education entirely to the study

of books, when objects and firsthand experience could be easily obtained he believed them to be of tremendous importance. On the other hand, he did not think it necessary to study them in the original in order to extract their full meaning and beauty.

Ward believed that in the teaching of natural science the concrete should come before the abstract. Firsthand experience should be employed wherever possible. Specimens, collections, and museums should be utilized. Demonstration and the use of all the various instruments and a knowledge of their properties should be a part of the teaching of the sciences.

He thought that logic, arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry, and calculus were "methods, tools, instruments, arts, not sciences . . . ." He objected to the fact that the student is taught to manipulate numbers with no knowledge of their significance.

#### The Problem of Education

On the last page of *Dynamic Sociology*, Ward states the problem of education:

The problem of education . . . is in short reduced to this . . . whether the social system shall always be left to Nature, always be genetic and spontaneous, and be allowed to drift listlessly on, intrusted to the by no means always progressive influences which have developed it and brought it to its present condition, or whether it shall be regarded as a proper subject of art, treated as other natural products have been treated by human intelligence, and made as much superior to nature, in this only proper sense of the word, as other artificial productions are superior to natural ones.

Ward considered happiness to be the ultimate end of human striving. Education, knowledge, dynamic opinion, dynamic action, and progress are the five means to happiness. The education of information is the initial means to the ultimate end.

## **AUTONOMOUS GROUPS AN UNSOLVED PROBLEM IN GROUP LOYALTIES AND CONFLICTS**

**Sophia M. Robison, Nathan Cohen, and Murray Sachs**

The May issue of *THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY* was devoted to educational work with autonomous groups. None of the articles, however, discussed the autonomous group whose self-directed activities are deliberately destructive of property and human life. This phase of group life deserves attention, for it plays an important role in juvenile crime, delinquency, and antisocial acts. Knowledge of the powerful influence exerted by autonomous groups upon the behavior of their members greatly assists us in understanding antisocial phenomena. It is, therefore, much to be regretted that as yet there has been very little systematic study of the interrelations of delinquency and autonomous groups from the standpoint of the positive contributions they make to the personality development of their members and their influence in justifying the destructive character of their activities. One of the most recent studies, a very revealing one which will be reported in this paper, was a by-product of a public-school program for delinquency and truancy prevention in the neighborhood of Harlem, New York. Similar studies have been made by the Commission on Community Interrelations,<sup>1</sup> which has undertaken a concerted experimental program of treating delinquency as a group, rather than as an exclusively individual, manifestation.

Crime and "gangs" have long been linked in the public mind, but the gang was thought of as a special form of human association—one intentionally devoted to crime. It has not been sharply apparent until recently that the gang does not differ in its structure and functioning from any other social club, such as are devoted to bridge-

<sup>1</sup> Reported in their publications. Address 212 West 50th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

playing and hiking, for example. It fulfills for its members the same social functions,<sup>2</sup> and differs from other clubs only in its relations to nonmembers. These are characterized by violent, open aggression. The normal type of social club is indifferent to nonmembers, or actively co-operates with them when occasion demands, or expresses hostility in socially approved ways. In the autonomous groups whose programs of activity are largely composed of hostile acts against nonmembers, we have an analogy to the in-group - out-group dichotomy of many so-called "primitive" societies. The problem in our own society is to find ways of coping with aggression against out-groups other than by jailing a few members of the offending groups or by trying to break up the gangs—procedures which have been ineffective in solving the problems posed by the organization of these groups. Moreover, in trying to break up gangs, social authorities are frequently breaking up the only medium through which the members can enjoy social relationships, thus creating a fresh problem for themselves, for human beings cannot live without social relationships.

The size of the aggregate membership in autonomous groups of the gang type is unknown. One police captain in New York City estimates that only five per cent of autonomous groups are "subversive." But this five per cent accounts for most of the truancy, juvenile delinquency, and crime which are of public concern. There has been a tendency in the past to think that if adolescents would join the socially approved youth organizations—such as settlements, Boy and Girl Scouts, the Christian and Hebrew associations—the problem of delinquency might be solved. The truth is, however, that probably not more than one sixth of the adolescent population is affiliated with such agencies, and that they have difficulty holding their adolescent members. There is abundant evidence to indicate that part of the difficulty is tied up with the failure of such agencies fully to understand the attitude of adolescents toward authority

<sup>2</sup> *Autonomous Groups Bulletin*, I, No. 1, 1.



and the tendency to impose upon them a pattern of leader and agency authority that hinders growth toward independence. Only more intimate knowledge of the type of group that adolescents find wholly congenial will afford the agencies the requisite basis for initiating changes in their operations and techniques which will make them more successful. The study here reported holds interest from this point of view.

Junior High School 1000<sup>a</sup> has an enrollment of 1,700 pupils; 95 per cent Negro, the remainder Puerto Ricans. In any one term, at least ten per cent of the boys have to be sent to court; another ten per cent suffer from deep-rooted personal problems even though they do not run afoul of the law. There is much truancy. In an endeavor to counteract such bad conditions, a group-work program for the entire neighborhood was initiated, as part of a project sponsored by a joint committee of educators and the school principal, whose co-operation was wholehearted. Funds for a psychiatric clinic and for an adequate group-work staff were furnished through a private foundation and the Board of Education.

The activities offered included a variety of recreations and hobbies. Teachers selected from the day school staff served as leaders of the various activities. Attendance was quite satisfactory. Boys could spend all day in the school, from nine in the morning until ten at night. The center was also open for them on holidays.

The director of the recreation center found, however, on checking the records of truants and delinquents against those of participants in the center program that too few of them attended the activities. Nor were they receiving the help of the psychiatric clinic. This suggested that, however well-intentioned the program, it was obviously not directly helping the bad neighborhood situation. An unusual step was then taken. The director undertook to go into the community and to develop connections with the known delinquents, with the intention of working with them in their respective streets and hangouts.

<sup>a</sup> For obvious reasons, the location and number of the school is fictitious.



He worked within the school district, an area of about 160 square blocks. He met the boys he knew on the streets, and chatted with them in an apparently casual way, or persuaded two or three of them from time to time to join him for refreshments in a drug-store or bakery. Through such friendly association and doing things with them—talking, eating, visiting, and joking—he gradually gained a degree of their confidence, and was able to gather intimate knowledge of the membership of the gangs and of the ways in which they functioned. He located and identified twenty gangs within the area. Parts of the district had more gangs than others, and the truancy and court figures showed these to be the neighborhoods with the greatest concentration of delinquency.

Members of the gangs ranged in age from 10 to 18; their leaders, from 15 to 20. The average membership is 20 boys, but as each gang also has a satellite following of younger boys and a "sister-group," and as each may in turn be a dependent of an adult gang, the total number of individuals involved in these webs of connection is considerable. Nor are the interconnections limited to this area. Many of the gangs have allies in Brooklyn, in other parts of Harlem, and in the Bronx. Apparently, the interconnections represent ties maintained by boys whose families have moved out of Harlem to other boroughs.

Each gang has an agreed meeting place—a candy store, a bakery, or the headquarters of one of the adult gangs. Each has endowed itself with a romantic name, and has designed its own insignia, which members wear on their sweaters. One gang wears black leather jackets and will not permit nonmembers to wear this type of garment. A recent police order prohibiting such display is bitterly resented.

Between many gangs the most violent hostility prevails, breaking out repeatedly in gang warfare, which sometimes results in serious injuries and deaths. Within a two-year period twenty boys and girls died as a result of gang fights! Each gang usually has a "war councilor," who plans strategy for the next attack, may over-

see distribution of collected missiles, and directs all aggressive activities. He may use as a consultant a member of an older gang with which his gang has an alliance.

As far as could be ascertained, the binding force in the gang is the liking the boys have for each other's company. Members "stake" each other for motion pictures and meals. They share their illicit gains from extortion and mugging, and each member usually carries on all his activities, legitimate and illegitimate, only with other members. They have a strong sense of loyalty toward each other, although this seems to be more marked toward certain members than toward others. This suggests that each gang is probably composed of several cliques of five or six members each, and that the cliques act together for self-protection and in aggressive attacks on outsiders.<sup>4</sup>

The heroes of these boys are those who have most shootings and assaults to their credit. A stabbing gives a boy prestige and status. The boy sent to a training school gains status, also.<sup>5</sup> In gangs, these boys display poor sportsmanship. They rarely play team games and efforts to induce them to organize teams for interteam play have been abortive. If a gang starts a game—of softball, for example, which they sometimes play—and an argument develops, they simply give up the game rather than try to adjust their differences. A favorite skill some of the boys practice is that of making home-made guns, at which they demonstrate considerable ingenuity and craftsmanship. Another "recreational" activity is the collection of materials for warfare—bricks, bedsprings, loot from empty houses, etc. They spend hours daily in picture houses—which they attend in groups—and other hours talking over what they have seen. To get money for pictures, to purchase ammunition for their guns, to buy their food—eaten in groups, rather than at home—the boys resort to thievery, mugging, and extortion, although they also earn money at odd jobs that come their way.

<sup>4</sup> Whyte shows the existence of such cliques within a street-corner club. See William A. Whyte, *Street Corner Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943).

<sup>5</sup> The same attitudes have been discovered among prisoners, according to Dr. Moreno.

Extortion and mugging not only yield profits, but serve also as an outlet for their aggressiveness. They hold up nongang members on the streets and force them to pay "tribute" for protection under threats of bodily injury. As the boys always go armed—with knives, guns, or meat cleavers—the threat is no idle one. The demand for tribute is the direct cause of much truancy in the school, for children when warned that a gang member is after them for tribute stay away from school, often with their parent's consent.

However, hostility against nonmembers may be purely gratuitous also. On entering a playground or a gym, the first activity of gang members is to disrupt and interrupt whatever activities are going on. Nongang members flee, and when the coast is clear the gang plays desultorily on the apparatus or carries on horseplay.

Enough has been said to show that these gangs have crystallized patterns of hostile, aggressive behavior, which serves as a model for the members. To gain prestige a boy must be good at all these varieties of annoying and disturbing others. He can look to the members of his gang for approval no matter what he does and the worse it is, the more approval he gains. The gang wars are sporadic outbursts in which all aggressive behavior characteristics are raised to a high pitch of intensity. Any boy who is injured knows that his fellow-members will "revenge" him, and his gratitude and loyalty are directed toward the friends whom he knows he can count on for support. Toward all other persons in his environment his attitude is one of suspicion.

Every group has to keep itself alive by adding new members. How members are chosen for these particular gangs is not entirely clear. Apparently, a likely boy is "tapped," somewhat as he would be by a fraternity. No boy told to join a gang would dare refuse, and boys who may never have committed very serious depredations can be forced into membership—to conform eventually, of course, to the established pattern of behavior.

Visits to the homes of gang members showed that "family life" hardly exists. Most parents do not know of their children's member-

ship in a gang. Children are not required to come home for meals. When a gang is in trouble with the police, boys may stay "hiding out" for several days, sometimes to the distress of the parents, sometimes not. When asked what their parents would do if they knew of the boy's gang membership, the invariable reply was: "They would beat us up"; or, "they would hand us over to the police."

The boys thus fear their parents. More than their parents, they fear the police, whose constant surveillance they regard as persecution. The older persons they respect are gang members with records society regards as "bad," but which to them are admirable. Toward all their contemporaries, except only their fellow-gang members, they feel hostility, which is raised to a special pitch of fury toward rival gangs when they reflect upon the wrongs and injuries that have been inflicted upon them. The wrongs and injuries which they have inflicted on other gangs appear in their eyes as righteous revenge or as well-deserved reprisals.

It is only too obvious that efforts to make these boys respect, and conform to, standards of socially accepted behavior must involve a good deal more than "wholesome" activities in a school social center. But what then? The pressures upon the population in Harlem apparently affect all its children; consequently, the bad housing, overcrowding, poor health, etc., which characterize that area cannot be regarded as the direct "cause" of the behavior of the gang members. The analogy with the behavior of some primitive societies is apparent to anyone acquainted with anthropological literature. Also, gangs such as these among adults have been known throughout history, and some of them have acquired highly romantic coloring. The apaches of Paris are a modern example.

In studying this phenomenon in our own country at this time, we must face squarely the fact that, despite the aid of the battery of psychological and sociological information we have accumulated, we really have not yet received a definitive answer to the question of why certain groups are violently hostile to all other groups. Rejec-

tion of others is apparently a propensity of all human beings, as Moreno has shown.<sup>9</sup> But the normal behavior toward those rejected is avoidance. Some other factor comes into play when active aggression is substituted for avoidance. Sadism is still a very obscure phenomenon. In these particular gangs, we seem to have groups practicing sadistic behavior within networks so widespread that the individuals involved receive approval from the only public they respect. Other human beings in their environment react with fear and avoidance—like the children who remain away from school—or, in the persons of police officers and teachers, they “crack down” on them, an action which the gang members rationalize as persecution.

The extent of the networks of public approval is such an important factor in the situation that the director concluded that all sectors of the community—parents, school, church, social agencies, and police—must mobilize and co-ordinate their forces to meet it. The isolated attempts of organized recreation cannot meet the problem, which also has to be seen against the background of deprivation in the basic areas of health, education, work opportunities, and housing that characterize this community. A committee of the New York City Welfare Council, formed at the suggestion of the project, recommends initiation of the area-project method, a combination of community organization and group work. The provisions of the plan are as follows:

1. Employment of a corps of group workers whose leadership would be exercised indirectly. Their specific task would be (a) to gain acceptance by the gangs, working with them where they are; (b) to help them locate headquarters and provide some measure of individual and group guidance at the headquarters; (c) to enlarge the scope of activities of each group through informal talks, “bull sessions,” motion pictures, athletics, etc.

2. Employment of an area co-ordinator with the following func-

<sup>9</sup> J. L. Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?* (Beacon, N. Y.: Beacon House, 1934).

tions: (a) to help and supervise the group workers; (b) to develop contacts with parents and agencies and secure their sponsorship and co-operation; (c) to establish a council of gangs for the purpose of developing a plan of intergroup activity and co-operative relationships.

3. Formation of an area committee composed of representatives from the police, schools, social agencies, and businessmen. This committee would be responsible for (a) supervising the co-ordinator and (b) co-ordinating the efforts of all factions in the community.

The methods by which group workers would exercise indirect leadership and gain acceptance from the groups are as yet only tentatively formulated. No social work training school in the United States has trained field workers for meeting such problems. Such work requires sound training in addition to special endowments. The methods developed by Haydon, reported in the *Journal of Social Issues* in August 1945, indicate the direction in which practice may develop. There are a few other experimental attempts in a similar direction which may help to provide a basis for sound techniques.<sup>7</sup> It is of the utmost importance that the experience of these experiments should be shared, so that theory can be developed; for the experience of one community should be made readily available to others if the essential features are to be disentagled from their accidental accompaniments.

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<sup>7</sup> Many hints on method can be found in articles in the publication *Applied Anthropology*, issued quarterly by the Society for Applied Anthropology, 10 Frisbie Place, Cambridge, Mass. Also in *Sociometry, A Journal of Interpersonal Relations*, published quarterly at 101 Park Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. These are in addition to the social-work journals, of course.

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*Murray Sachs* was the director of the Harlem Project. *Nathan Cohen*, who is on the staff of the New York School of Social Work, and *Sophia M. Robison* were on the Advisory Board.



## THE UNIVERSALITY OF NATURAL GROUPINGS IN HUMAN SOCIETIES

Carleton S. Coon

The theme underlying discussion of "autonomous groups" seems to be the importance of distinguishing between two different ways of classifying human beings. The first way is that with which we are most familiar in our own society. It is based on a single criterion or on a combination of related criteria. Veterans, steelworkers, letter carriers, Episcopalians, anthropologists, millionaires, these are similar categories of people. They have in common some mutual experience, participation in a war, the same occupation, religious conviction, or state of wealth. These categories refer to single departments in the lives of individuals who may vary enormously in personality and who in most cases see other members of the same categories no more frequently than their common interests make necessary. Members of the same church, employees of the same company, and colleagues of the same faculty and department may dislike each other intensely. Any agency that tries to appeal to people as members of a single such category runs into serious cross-currents, and seldom succeeds in accomplishing its objective.

Politicians know better than this. In any American city you will find ward organizations, small neighborhood groups which serve as cells in a larger machine. Each cell consists of a number of people who know one another personally, who meet habitually in the same clubroom or poolroom, who drink together and exchange stories, and who attend each other's weddings and funerals. These are groups of old cronies, each of whom knows the foibles and virtues of all the others. They know when to joke with each other and when to be serious, what subjects are to be avoided with whom, and so forth.

Each of these ward organizations has a leader, who holds his

power for two reasons: he knows how to get along with his associates, and he knows how to get them what they want, as, for instance, city jobs or liquor licenses. This leader is a member of another group, all of the ward leaders of his general class, and these men know how to get along together too, although perhaps not as perfectly as with their ward groups. They also know how to please the boss. They see that he is elected and he sees that they get what they want.

An efficient political system, as outlined above, is based on a recognition and use of natural groups. Any system that runs smoothly—religious, economic, fraternal, or otherwise—works the same way. Apparently this self-evident fact has come as a surprise to a number of social workers, educators, and industrialists. It is no surprise to anthropologists, who observe it every day in the study of their material from simpler, pre-literate, non-European, or whatever kind of societies they work with.

It must not be imagined that there is an open-and-shut difference between "primitive" and "modern" societies in respect to these two kinds of grouping. Categorical and natural groups are found in all kinds of societies at all levels of complexity. All successful organizations, all hierarchies that work, are based originally on natural groupings. Between "primitive" and "modern" the difference is quantitative. The simpler the society, the greater the role of the natural grouping, the more complex the society, the more numerous and complex the categorical groupings.

In the most primitive human societies known, such as those of the Andaman Islanders, Tasmanians, Yaghans of Tierra del Fuego, Indians of Lower California in the Jesuit days, the family is the only group of any permanency, and beyond it is a slightly larger group of several families that move about together hunting, gathering wild vegetable foodstuffs, fishing, and so on. All of the people in such a group know each other intimately. All have found some way of adjusting their several personalities into a working institution. Discordant members are either ejected or they leave vol-

untarily to form the nuclei of new groups. If two men have equal qualities of leadership, they will naturally conflict and naturally separate with their followers.

Let us see what happens in a society where food is more abundant, and the group that shares it is more numerous, while the area from which they obtain it is smaller. In northern Morocco, before the French and Spanish defeated Abd-el-Krim in 1926, most of the people were farmers. Blacksmiths and butchers cared for the needs of the groups among which they lived, in providing them with tools and weapons and in facilitating the sharing of meat. Each valley is inhabited by one or more groups of people closely related to one another by blood, and each of these groups manifests a strong internal solidarity. Each valley group is practically an independent nation, warring on its neighbors whenever population pressure has made its members extremely sensitive to any violation of its property or other sovereign rights.

Under these circumstances the personal adjustments of the members of an extended family, or clan, inhabiting all or a part of such a valley, are tight. So great is the tension that if one individual cannot get along easily with his uncles and brothers, there will soon be trouble, and he will have to leave home. He will either head directly for some city outside the mountain area, as Fez or Tangier, where he can find an easier adjustment in a larger, less tense population, or he may find another clan in some distant valley where there is a shortage of manpower, into which he can marry, and where he may eventually start a new clan of his own.

This is only part of the story of the formation of natural groups in northern Morocco. But it serves to illustrate how by shifts of personnel, expulsion, migration, and even violence natural groups of compatible people are formed. They grow within the framework of the extended family, since there is no technical process which these people need perform that requires more hands than a clan could supply.

Although the various clans in a system of valleys may fight each

other intermittently over a variety of excuses, the real reason is population pressure, an internal force. However, when some external force begins to press them they will hastily unite and elect a leader from among the most powerful men of their various clans. His leadership lasts just as long as the pressure which created the need for it is maintained. Once the pressure is relaxed and the warriors cease to spend their energy in pursuit of the common enemy, they will begin quarreling with each other, clan by clan and valley by valley, until they have gone home and relapsed into their normal state of local independence.

Among the Riffians there is very little division of labor. Almost every man is a farmer, and each farmer is also a mason, carpenter, and general Jack-of-all-trades. In more complex societies where food is easier to get, a large proportion of the people are craftsmen, as in early Hawaii, or in any modern Oriental city. Anyone who has visited Fez will recall rows of little shops, one street full of the booths of leatherworkers, another of ironmongers, another of spice merchants. Some of these groups were manufacturing goods, others selling them. Whatever they were doing they were operating either in one business or, at most, business with two or three partners and a half-dozen apprentices.

Thus the businesses are small enough to consist of single face-to-face groups. The men who work at a single business are also members of a face-to-face organization, the guild. They see and talk to each other every day, elect their own officers, set their own standards, and make their own rules. Any individual who will not abide by the rules, or who is generally incompatible, will be forced out. The city consists of an aggregation of such guilds, all under their separate ward leaders, and eventually under the pasha of the city. Labor troubles have a hard time arising under such conditions of natural organization and intimacy.

In societies as complex as those of Europe and America over the

last hundred and fifty years, institutions always start in the time-honored fashion. A group of cronies will get together and form a club. Or a number of businessmen who have known each other for years will charter a corporation. General Donovan, in setting up the O.S.S., brought in some of his oldest and most trusted friends to form the nucleus of his organization.

Although these institutions have started out as natural groups, the face-to-face element in administration persists only at the top. In a business, there is a sudden demand for fifty spot-welders, or two hundred salesmen, and they need have nothing more in common than a mutual skill. Donovan needed a hundred men who could speak Serbian, or a dozen who knew Judo. As time goes on these great organizations grow so large that everyone does not know everyone else. The cliques at the top lose touch with those lower down in the structure, and ultimately fail to realize that they exist. Human relations come to be placed on a formal and mechanical basis, and that is where trouble begins.

In time of war Americans, like the Riffians cited earlier, will stick together and do their jobs; few care to complain about the incompatibility of the man at the next lathe, or the petty tyranny of the foreman, as long as the common pressure to win the war is maintained. Once it is relaxed, all of the pent-up grievances, all of the latent causes of disequilibrium, break out. We are now in a period of readjustment. This adjustment will be reached only when capital, labor, and government, and all other interested agencies come to realize that the only successful way to organize human beings in complex institutions is through combinations of small natural groups of people who know each other, see each other every day, and can become adjusted to one another through the processes of selection, elimination, and habituation. What I wish to emphasize here is that natural groups are characteristic of all kinds of human beings everywhere, and even of lower animals. They are

the fundamental units of human organization. The sooner we recognize their importance, the sooner we will be able to plan successful readjustments of institutions within our own country and in the world.

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## WORKING WITH GROUPS IN CLASSROOMS

Elaine Forsyth and Lloyd A. Cook

A two-year experiment in a tenth-grade class undertaken "to improve the learning situation by democratizing pupil attitudes and behaviors" was described in the *American Sociological Review*.<sup>1</sup> This goal, it was assumed, could be attained by teaching "the class how to manage the group process [and] to work together as a self-directing team with a job to do."

The significance to the Committee on Autonomous Groups was that the first step involved locating friendship coteries in the class and measuring the social interaction by sociometric tests. This afforded the basis for realistic planning of subsequent procedures. Three techniques were used: individual guidance designed to adjust isolated individuals to new coteries; group management; role practice.<sup>2</sup> At the end of the experiment, the class was re-tested and the volume of social interaction was found to have increased to a striking degree. The assumption appears well-founded that the social-activity program and group-management technique were responsible for this result.

The group-management process is described below. Although the case material is drawn from elementary classes, the situations illustrated bear a close analogy to those in a variety of informal

<sup>1</sup> Lloyd A. Cook, "An Experimental Sociographic Study of a Stratified 10th Grade Class," *X* (1945), 250-61.

<sup>2</sup> Charles E. Hendry, "Role Practice Brings the Community into the Classroom," *Sociometry*, VII (1944), 196-204.



education activities in which high-school and college teachers would be interested, such as summer camps and institutes, adult discussion groups, extracurricular activities, and the "model congresses." If such activities are to succeed, they must be handled with other than conventional classroom techniques, but unfortunately little is known of practical alternatives. The following information, therefore, is of practical value. It points to one way of meeting the gravest problem in American education: how to train students "in the spirit of willing cooperation."

### **A Combined Social Studies and Art Project**

Big John swept the paper houses, the green grass, and the flower gardens off the table top, kicked a chair in passing, and stalked out of the classroom. Hang it, he was mad, mad as he had not been since whipping the boy whose place he had taken on the street as gang leader. Little John, his twin, had warned him about the new teacher, Miss Silk Pants they called her. "Dumb," Johnny had said, "yeh, dumb like a fox." But, in retrospect, it had not been Silk Pants that had put the squeeze on him, crossed him up. No, it was the gang, *his* gang, in there now, playing around, having fun on a Saturday and he with nothing to do, no place to go. And it had all started so simply three weeks ago.

The new teacher had given her usual talk—"good living," "group unity," and the like, and how, through art, one could "learn by doing." Stale stuff sure, but Big John had "given the nod" so that a trip to the art museum was voted through. And then, on the next Monday, the "project" had started.

Would the class like "to experiment with some art materials," say build some houses? "Ok, why not," so class members alone or in pairs set about making fancy dwellings out of papier-mâché. For a while, everyone kept busy, the task was exciting, and then the horseplay began—running, shoving, wisecracking, throwing things. To all of this, strangely, the teacher seemed fairly indif-

ferent. Most often she went about her business smiling, helping out here, making a suggestion there. It was all, as Little John had said, "damn puzzling."

With the houses completed, José asked what to do with them. "Give 'em away," somebody said; "take 'em home," said another. José asked the teacher what to do but, before she could answer, Big John spoke up. "Give 'em away, take 'em home, tear 'em up, whatever you want. They're yours, ain't they?"

It was then, as Big John now saw, that trouble had really started. Teacher had not done much, just asked a question. "When people get their houses made, what do they do with them?" "Why, put 'em on the land," some simple girl had answered. This had started the class on a course of action that was too strong to check, so the gang had swung in line, carrying John along. Gene remembered some sand in an unused bin, another child an old table, and presently, "miles of good earth" were awaiting occupancy. Each pupil jammed his house down as he saw fit or slipped it in on the sly, depending on his position in the class "peck order." Coming in late, Big John found the land pretty well taken. He knocked over three houses on the tract he wanted, claiming it all as his estate.

It was here, one might suspect, that teacher control may have wavered a bit, for no one likes to see a bully in action. At any rate, there was a period of inaction and confusion, a delay in hitting upon a scheme that might do what needed to be done. A kind of *tedium vitae* struck the class, evidenced by the usual run of pushing and hauling, petty quarrels and jealousies. To preserve the group, the children were led to landscape their holdings.

After two or three huddles, the group got an idea that seemed worth trying. Observing the group one day, the teacher praised the homes, the flower gardens, and then, with a puzzled look, remarked that there was "something lacking." The place did not look like the area from which the children came. What was wrong? What was needed? "Ain't no streets," some youngsters

said, "we ain't got no streets like a city." We had assumed this response, sooner or later, and were prepared to use it to catch Big John in a trap of his own making. Instead of permitting group leaders to slap down the streets as they had done their houses, we drew from the class the idea that streets are "regular like," i.e., in a pattern. John himself pointed this out and, by a series of steps that he never quite understood, he became the leader of a "block survey" to determine how many streets there should be, how far apart, and so forth. His findings were drawn to scale and then a grid was made. When this grid was placed over the land site, a main street ran exactly through the center of the boy's estate.

At first John fumed and fussed around, wanting to fight a member of his own gang who pointed out that he, John, had made the plan but now was "squealing." With the class holding tight to the plan, the boy did about all that was left to him. He picked up his house, knocked over several others, and stamped out of the room. But as one might imagine, the runaway did not stay out long. With his own gang still at work on the project, there was, as he said, "nothing to do, no one to play with." In a day or two, word came that he would "make a deal" with the teacher who at once pointed out that her responsibility was very limited, that the class itself was involved. John's re-entry into the group on a basis of "fair play" for all was a nice problem, one into which we shall not go. The incident indicates an initial step in an ongoing process of teaching "community," a sense of group thought and action for a common good.

#### A Lesson in Arithmetic

The class is a sixth-grade class in "arithmetic," droning along in the usual way. On reaching a chapter on insurance, pupils were asked if their fathers owned any. Where did they get it? What is a company? How is it formed? Can we make one? Who can be in it? What will it insure? Finding the text of no help, children asked their parents. Inquiries were then directed to local insurance

agents, one of whom came to class. Somewhat to his surprise, he did not know all the answers and letters were sent to the home office.

The group debated insuring its members against a number of "natural hazards," one being low grades, but settled finally on sickness. A major illness involved five or more consecutive absences, a minor illness one to four, with "benefits" of five cents and two cents per day respectively. Stock was sold at thirty-seven cents a share, with "dividends" payable monthly by a local bank that had chipped in with the teacher to provide the little extra money needed in the venture. All of this involved considerable calculation, plus a great deal of total group and small committee work. For example, the pupils made a study of their own absences from school over the past term, using records and other data from the principal's office.

After the first dividend was paid, the company found that it had a small surplus in the bank. What was to be done with this \$2.13? Reflecting our profit system, the children voted to divide it, but here they ran into what was for them an unheard of thing, excess profit tax. What do other companies do with their surpluses? At the request of the class, the town's leading banker agreed to come in and talk it over, and this led to a search for the investment paying the greatest returns.

The industry selected was a far-off public utility paying high dividends, but before the deal was closed the pupils were led to face a very hot local problem, home-owned vs. outside enterprises. A community survey provided a mass of figures to untangle. The issue was discussed at home and parents, on both sides, presented their views at class. When a vote was taken, it favored home-owned concerns but by less than two to one, putting a strain on the losers to go along on group rule.

Next was a look-see trip about town, including "audits" of

several promising investment opportunities. As class choice began to settle on a small sheet-metal plant, the president came to discuss the business. Asked if the group could buy in, he was at first doubtful but managed to find two shares of stock. At the next class session, the teacher once again raised a controversial question. Plant products were being shipped (1940- —) to "an aggressor nation," did the group want to support war? While the question did not start a real blitz, as it might have, it was debated with much show of feeling, along with some facts and figures.

In that school today, one can still see framed and hanging on the wall, two gilt-edged stock certificates, inscribed to the class. They show membership in a struggling local "co-op," paying almost no dividends.

### The Teacher as a Group Manager

Such cases, and some much more complex,<sup>3</sup> can be drawn from schools everywhere, from kindergarten through college. They represent a trend away from academic education toward a functional, flexible, socialized learning. Being life-centered, what goes on *makes sense to the learners*, and, too, it indicates a new teacher role. Teachers are not subject-matter specialists, assigners and hearers of recitations. They are at best group managers, seeking to teach young people how to organize themselves for co-operative problem-solving. It is this role, the role of a *group strategist*, on which we wish to comment.

Most teachers imagine that an incoming class is a group. It is only an aggregate, a massing or assembling of so many units. Children come from groups, to be sure. They are, in the main, what their groups are, and bring these group ways with them, speak and act them out. If "let alone," they will create in school a version of their life outside, a point of stress in our first case. Teachers aid

<sup>3</sup> For example, see Lloyd A. Cook, "An Experimental Sociographic Study of a Stratified 10th Grade Class," *American Sociological Review*, X (1945), 250-61.

and abet this natural process, wittingly or not, by putting themselves, or being put, into an "enemy" role. The group process then becomes one of evading, thwarting, or bedeviling the teacher, with the latter struggling for control. New teacher tactics, usually more and more severe "discipline," bring countertactics, and so the battle goes.

Democratic group management is harder to analyze. It would appear to rest on several kinds of insights and on an array of skills that are learned in action and yet, at times, seem quite unteachable. One must, for example, like children, see them not as flitting shadows or dirty, noisome duties, but know them as human beings, each with an inner life, a past history. Children are people with all of a people's strengths and weaknesses, angel-devil ambivalences. One must know them as they come, project oneself into their roles, get a bang out of their doings.

One must know also a great deal about group life. In democratic management, people are not pushed about. On the contrary, they experience a feeling of self-realization, of having a hand in and helping to shape something better or bigger than they are. Ideas are drawn from the group, concerns are shared and enlarged, plans are made and translated into action. In all of this, the teacher plays a variety of parts—motivator, co-ordinator, appraiser, and so on. He knows, at best, by what special handle to reach every group member, to what appeal or situation he will respond, and he seeks always to lead a group through its own leaders. At times, he is a technical expert, seeing that the group is structured so that it can achieve its basic goals; at times a wayward, failing human being, inviting the group to jump in and help him out. Above all, he must know what Steinbeck meant when, in his *In Dubious Battle*, he noted that the striking apple-pickers came out of their losing fight with "a new spirit."

Once started, a course of action rolls along from goal to goal,



as in the so-called arithmetic class. One does not stop it and say, "Now children, it is time for some education." Education becomes a part of, in fact is the heart of, the participating processes narrated in the foregoing examples.

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933

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County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Jean B. Barr, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the Business Manager of The Journal of Educational Sociology and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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## A PUBLIC-SCHOOL SERVICE FOR AUTONOMOUS GROUPS

R. J. Pulling

A mere glance at 1946 America reveals a country of huge and powerful organizations of people. Such organized groups can and do exert strong influences on our democracy. At the same time we see the common welfare inundated in a flood of conflicts among gigantic pressure groups, each seeking its own purpose. This is the America of power, the America of the headlines.

But there is another America, one not to be found in the headlines, one not to be seen at a glance. This other—and I venture to call it the Primary America—is also a structure of human organizations, of countless, unco-ordinated, and unpublicized groups. These are the natural groupings of American people, which form the very pattern of human relationships in every American community. One becomes aware of their presence only as one finds oneself drawn into one or more such groups and becomes an accepted member of the community. Even then, the real and potential influence of these groups on democratic life escapes one's attention. It remains for the student of social living, or the widely affiliated citizen who is sensitive to social progress, to discover the social and human values inherent in the natural groupings of citizens within the community. With this discovery, the sociologist or the progressive citizen immediately becomes enamored of this vast network of autonomous groups.

In a time of power progress, we should not be surprised at moves to co-ordinate these groups, but the very forces that produce autonomous groups abhor co-ordination. The most skillful efforts at co-ordination are, therefore, more than likely to fail. Or, even worse, the efforts to co-ordinate might succeed, but groups so co-ordinated will necessarily lose the cohesive force which previously drew them together. The co-ordinator then must rely on

colorful showmanship and militant purposes to keep his newly formed mass together, and there is danger that his new need will be met by a demagogue riding a white horse—and you may be sure that it will be the white horse of democratic slogans and Americanized banners.

Group action of thousands of organizations can produce a better life and a better world in which to live it. But if autonomously organized citizens are to be effective in bringing about a better life in a better world without co-ordination, then the burden of achievement depends, as do all democratic achievements, on the success with which each group accomplishes its own purposes. And like the house that Jack built, the success of each group depends on the programs of information and activity which are provided for the members, and the ways in which they are presented.

For it must be noted that autonomous groups harbor possible dangers and are victims of certain inefficiencies. The very interests that bring people together are likely to be selective. Individuals of similar interests are more than likely to bring to the group common prejudices, beliefs, and attitudes, similar facts or a similar lack of facts, and like degrees of culture. Grouping of such similarities may provide nothing more than an echoing of one's own points of view, a pyramiding of common prejudices, a pooling of ignorance, ill-based convictions, and, in the end, possibly ill-advised action.

The core of the functioning of all autonomous groups is their meeting together. At meetings, information is gathered, ideas exchanged, common agreements reached. Group action is decided upon to achieve the purposes which evolve from the members' association.

It is therefore unfortunate that, generally speaking, officers who have the responsibility of providing programs for their groups have no training, and little experience, in program-making. Moreover, as a rule, program officers possess very limited knowledge of the

resources of their community available for program-building. They are unacquainted with the methods and the techniques essential for sound and effective program-planning.

However, the danger of narrowness and the weakness of inefficiency do not require co-ordination. Both may be averted by providing program officers with the training they should have. This is one purpose of the Division of Extension Education of the Board of Education of Schenectady. Its Community Service Program offers to serve, rather than co-ordinate, the more than 1,100 different adult groups so far discovered in the city. It offers to groups, clubs, and organizations the services of an experienced person to assist them in planning programs. On request, this staff member of the Board takes to officers of groups, or to their program committees, an accumulated "know how" in program procedures. She advises and trains them in the use of group methods which are interesting, efficient, and democratic. She suggests a variety of program possibilities which are stimulating and thought-provoking. Through her, the Division provides speakers, discussion leaders, and experts in selected subject fields. Also through her, community groups can broadcast club news, or the story of group activities, on the fifteen-minute local program called "Club Time." This is put on every Tuesday and Thursday by the Division. Clubs which are anxious to keep up with the times turn to this staff member for visual aids, recordings, printed materials, specially prepared mimeographed materials, study guides, and other "new tools for learning." In addition, the Division organizes leadership training institutes for club leaders and program chairmen. Through demonstration and participation, leaders from all kinds of groups learn new methods adaptable to the peculiar purposes of their organizations.

If and when a group leader feels that the membership can be served best by a series of meetings on a given subject, or can profit by the continued services of a leader with a given skill, such regu-

lar leadership personnel, both volunteer and paid, is provided for the group for as many sessions as required. With certain exceptions, all services mentioned are free to the organizations, the exceptions being charges for film rentals and projector services, which are provided at cost. Groups pay speakers' transportation.

Every youth group which pursues a selected interest is offered the services of a salaried adviser. The adviser and all other services are available to groups meeting any time of day or night, any day of the week, and any place in the city or county.

Working with the Division's Community Service Program is the Citizens' Unity Committee. This is a group of citizens whose major purpose, strange as it may seem, is to help other groups achieve their goals. To this end, the Citizens' Unity Committee studies current issues of public affairs and prepares pertinent materials in the fields which seem to it most important for the American people to be studying.

Suppose you are a member of an organized group in Schenectady. You plan to have a discussion on "The Implications of the Atomic Bomb" at your next meeting. A telephone call to the office of the Citizens' Unity Committee brings you one or more General Electric scientists who are already prepared and willing to bring such a discussion to your clubrooms. Or, next Monday, your group could attend a public "Town Meeting" on the housing problem. Or on the following Sunday, they could meet to listen to a radio discussion called a "Veteran's View of World Brotherhood," sponsored by the Citizens' Unity Committee. Your group might need leadership in considering "America's Discrimination Problem." It may want to keep informed about the progress of the United Nations Organization. Again, your group might be interested in a series of discussions on economics, presented through slides and study guides. The Citizens' Unity Committee is prepared to meet all these needs and any others which your club itself formulates.

Each month the Citizens' Unity Committee sends to the club officers in Schenectady a list of subjects suggested for study and the services available in the suggested subject areas. Groups which elect to study any of the suggested subjects and to make use of the proffered help are ensured against limited interests and one-sided narrowness. Equally important, they are assured of worth-while, interesting meetings. That clubs value these program services is proved by the constant demand for them and by the fact that the suggested subjects are widely studied.

In all these services of the Extension Division, the autonomy of each group is protected. The Division realizes that the groups maintain the direct, face-to-face association within which develop the kind of communication and refinement of ideas that are invaluable to a self-governing democracy. The Division respects the purposes of each group, well aware that, however varied these purposes may be, all of them put together exert very significant pressures in the interest of the common welfare.

The reader may ask why public education should extend its services to already organized groups. The answer is that adult-education programs of most groups are of a high grade and in others the potentialities are excellent. At considerable cost, a variety of adult classes are organized in evening schools over the country. Is it any less appropriate or any less valuable to make our educational services available to groups that are already organized?

Community groups are anxious for help. Program chairmen are at their wits' end searching for good content and new techniques. Response to these needs offers adult educators an important opportunity for justifying their leadership. If they do not seize this opportunity, the only alternative is abdication to a war-born crop of autonomy-destroying co-ordinators.

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## UNITED NATIONS AND LOCAL GROUPS

Maria Rogers

NOTE: *The following letter, written to a friend who was one of the advisers to the United States delegation to the United Nations Organization at the General Assembly meeting in January 1946, contains so many interesting comments on the function of the face-to-face, local, or informal group that permission was asked to publish it.*

Dear Arthur:

It was good of you to send me that clipping from *The London Times* of January 11, describing the use which the U.S.S.R. makes of village, community, and local factory groups in preparing nominations for the election of delegates to the Supreme Soviet. The attitude of the Russian government is not, as the *Times* correspondent apparently assumes, exclusively Communist. It is an attitude common to all mass political movements and "social action" organizations in Western society. I think the attitude is dangerous both to peace and to social stability. I will try to make clear my reasons for thinking so.

First, we had better define our terms. By local group I mean the grouping of individuals which is based on interpersonal, face-to-face relationships, familial and otherwise. In the past, in Western society, with meager means of transportation, such groupings were limited by definite geographical boundaries, so they have been called "neighborhoods," "local" groups, and "primary" groups. Since the development of rapid transportation, face-to-face groups have burst the bonds of neighborhood, and now the terms "informal" and "natural" are being applied to them. In primitive societies such groupings took place within real or imputed kinship relationships, hence "clans," "villages," "moieties," "phratries," etc., have been used to designate them. Anthropologists use the latter terms, sociologists the former; but they all mean more or less the same thing: the coalescence of individuals, as a result of the attractions which they feel for each other, into groups which pursue common aims. Sometimes these aims are explicitly defined. Often they are not. Most often they are both explicit and implicit. Such groups are the real, the immediate, the meaningful, part of their human environment for the individuals who compose them.

In our culture, these groups are for the most part not highly self-conscious and they are not at all conscious of the fundamental role they

play in social structure and functioning. There is no danger in that naïveté; but what is deplorable is that, generally, social scientists are unaware of their significance. Happily, this situation seems bound to change, as indicated by the following quotation from an article by Dr. George Lundberg in the May 1945 issue of *The American Journal of Sociology* (pages 504-505):

[Sociologists have] been turning to the intensive study of relatively small and simple social systems rather than the cosmic researches to which [they] in the past have been addicted. . . . We are leaving the "natural history" stage of our science and turning to "atomic" research. . . . The quest is for principles of social behavior in simple systems which may lend themselves to generalized application to vast and complex situations. . . . The progress of physical theory might be said to have consisted in learning more and more about less and less. Yet it turns out that what we learn about this "less and less" which we abstract is applicable to the "more and more." . . . It is precisely this atomic and analytic approach which has made possible . . . the most comprehensive and magnificent syntheses ever achieved by the human mind.

Such "atomic" research as has so far been done by social scientists gives us good reason to believe that the face-to-face group is the structure of society within which every individual is molded and developed psychologically and socially. This being true, it follows that to the degree that the face-to-face group is strong and performs its basic psychological and sociological functions, society will be strong. To the degree that it is inchoate and fails to do so, society is weakened and must disintegrate. Therefore, even with the problems of the globe pressing for solution and the energies of all men of good will mobilized to solve them, the role of the face-to-face group must not be lost sight of for a moment. Like the physician, whose ability to cure disease is a consequence of the accumulation of knowledge of minute organisms, such as bacteria and blood cells, so the politician and social scientist who want to cure the ills of society will be able to do so only after we accumulate adequate knowledge of the elemental structures of society, among which there is no question whatever that the face-to-face group is the most important.

Our age witnesses concentration upon public government unique in the world's history. The possible exception is that of the Greek city-states. But there only the relatively small segment of free citizens in each community was expected to concentrate on public affairs, whereas today the opinion prevails that public government should be the overriding, pre-

dominating interest of every person, of every class, including children not yet citizens and not yet in their teens! It amounts almost to an obsession.

The literate twentieth-century man is terrifyingly ignorant of the fact that *public government is not the creative process by means of which a society grows, develops, and renews itself*, that society is as much his concern as the state. Important as the state, or public government, may be, the well-nigh universal ignorance of its limitations is dangerous in the extreme. Private government, by which I mean the multitudinous activities carried on by face-to-face groups and communities, should receive at least co-ordinate attention in order to restore the requisite, realistic balance to the picture of human life.. The stronger informal associations of individuals, face-to-face groups, and communities become, the more private government we will have—and the less public government we will need. (I am indebted to Charles Merriam's book, *Public and Private Government*, for these very useful phrases.)

It is no exaggeration to say that because these basic factors in society are so largely ignored today, public government has come to have such overweening significance for Western theorists and for the public which accepts their judgments. Dr. Lundberg's article says that the trend away from this position is, alas, "still in its early stages." However, no matter what degree of significance the ill-informed continue to attach to public government, and however much, in consequence, its powers are mistakenly extended, it can never solve by itself the problems our modern world is facing.

A by-product, or corollary, of the overemphasis upon public government is the political approach to the face-to-face group. With this approach, these groups are seen only as units to be manipulated in the interest of "programs" and policies drawn up by overhead agencies, organizations, and political parties and movements. Such groups can be manipulated, as Tammany Hall and other political machines have proved. Political machines based on them can withstand formidable assaults. The political approach to face-to-face groups is, however, highly injurious to society. Those who advocate and practice it are unaware, or choose to ignore, the primary fact that, as the nuclear structure of society, the face-to-face group performs a number of interrelated and complex functions, no one of which can be emphasized and developed at the expense of the others without doing grave injury to society.

Let me amplify that proposition. The face-to-face group has three primary functions, which it has performed throughout human history.

They are interrelated and interdependent, so the listing below indicates no priority of importance.

First, it conditions the individual psychologically and socially. It passes on the cultural heritage and provides the individual with a stable core of values and moral judgments. (This holds true even though many groups condition their members to values and moral judgments which other groups regard as empty or "immoral," respectively.)

Second, the face-to-face group serves as the arena within which the individual's actual liberty unfolds itself; as the milieu in which his unique creative urges are developed and manifested.

Juxtapose these two functions and you can see that at one and the same time the group acts both as an inhibiting and constraining influence and as a liberating and germinating force—a paradoxical and enigmatic situation, whose only analogy can be found in the growth processes of tissues and cells. It arises from the peculiar character of human nature, which demands, on the one hand, stability and order and, on the other, spontaneity and creative expression. Human beings are so constituted that they must have understanding and intercommunication with at least a few congenial associates, first in the family and then in other face-to-face groups, before they can give expression to their own peculiar, individual insights and express their creative impulses. Yet those relationships presuppose order, stability, repetition, and custom. So arises the paradox.

This dichotomy of the face-to-face group is the eternal dilemma of society. If the scales are weighted on the side of tradition, of use and wont, at the expense of individual spontaneity and creativity, the society breeds inflexible individuals unable to adjust to social change, and thus the society decays. If, on the other hand, the scales are weighted on the side of unlimited spontaneity and "self-expression," the society breeds undisciplined and self-willed individuals who do not easily co-operate for the common good, and thus the society disintegrates. (Our own society, to some extent, and that of fifth-century Athens, to a greater degree, are examples.)

Finally, third, the face-to-face group confers on the individual his sense of membership in a society, through enabling him to function as a member of a group. The individual cannot function socially in isolation; he must be a member of one or more groups. In considering this proposition, social functioning must not be defined exclusively in terms of concern with public government. The definition must include equal

concern with private government and also with the personal activities carried on by groups, which contribute so definitely to individual psychic satisfaction and personality growth.

If the above propositions are valid, it seems reasonable to conclude that when the face-to-face group becomes, in the minds of the rulers of any nation, a unit for manipulation, the weight of the state will be thrown on the side of conformity, assent to predetermined policies and programs, and stamping out of difference. Hence, in consequence, creativity will be crushed.

Apparently, all that has saved man's creativity so far in human history is the circumstance that all-powerful governments have never rested on popular approval. The great Eastern kingdoms of antiquity, for example, did not heed popular plebiscites as a formal basis for their power. Neither did the autocratic regimes in Europe. None of them concerned themselves overmuch with the interpersonal relationships of their subjects and their face-to-face groups. Hence revolt was always possible. It is our age that has invented "totalitarian" governments. That hideous word means that the state concerns itself with every interpersonal relationship of every citizen, with all types of face-to-face groups, including even the family. Every group that cannot be controlled by the state apparatus is banned. That policy is essential to ensuring a majority for the state in the popular plebiscites.

Until this satanic invention was consummated, the few governments that have rested on popular approval were governments whose powers were limited by constitutions or other institutional arrangements. Freedom to form interpersonal relationships and face-to-face groups, was absolute. This freedom is basic to formation of opposition political parties. Freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and freedom of worship are simply corollaries of, or symbols for, the basic freedom to choose one's associates and the goals of private co-operative action. Without that freedom, the others would have no meaning, no immediate realistic point of reference. This proposition is based on the deeply rooted propensity of human beings to be spontaneously attracted or repelled by others whom they meet face to face and to choose those with whom they wish to act in concert. To interfere with this propensity is as horrible and as fiendish as to interfere with the sexual propensity of human beings by sterilization. If the present trend toward totalitarian government should triumph, with the inevitable consequences of repression of the creative



element in human nature—spontaneity—and prohibition of the freedom to form congenial groups on the basis of choice, the future of mankind becomes too horrible to contemplate.

Our only hope is that the significance of the face-to-face group will before long be fully recognized by Western thinkers. There is ground for some optimism in this respect in the trend which Dr. Lundberg notes among social scientists. When it reaches full tide, the following propositions will probably be regarded as "common sense":

1. All of the functions of the face-to-face group—the moral, the creative, and the social—are equally important.
2. Their interrelation and interdependence are organic. Although they can be distinguished for dialectical convenience, the real unity of their functioning must never be forgotten.
3. The social functioning of the individual comprises interrelated activities based on spontaneous interpersonal relationships directed toward three ends: personal satisfactions, private government, and public government.
4. No pressure should be exerted upon the face-to-face group to develop its interest in public government in preference to its interests in its own private concerns and at the expense of its full functioning as the medium through which private government and the community control and develop social action.
5. Due recognition must be accorded the fact that the group, in order to perform its creative function, must be free from any immediate, short-term, political allegiance and manipulation, whether by government, political parties, social action organizations, or agencies with predetermined goals and programs.
6. The right of the group to autonomy is inherent. Autonomy is the signal of liberty and a positive contribution to, even a condition of, the development of a healthy society.

(Of course, all the above propositions assume a cultural order and the invention of adequate institutional arrangements which will mediate conflicts among groups or, better, provide the conditions for the higher synthesis within which conflicts are resolved, as Mary Follett recommended many years ago.)

In a society so disintegrated as ours, such an approach to the face-to-face group is indispensable. Our cultural resources need to be utilized to strengthen and develop all of the functions of the face-to-face group. This reverses the situation of today, in which the face-to-face group, insofar as it is recognized and dealt with as a unit, is regarded as a po-



tential political force to be manipulated in the interest of "putting across" one or another of the many programs of social reform drawn up by overhead agencies and "sold" to local groups by means of various publicity devices (propaganda). Groups are induced to identify themselves symbolically with programs and policies the meaning of which is not immediately real, or authentic, or derived from their experience, but advenient, arbitrary, and not related organically to that experience. We who are opposed, say, to anti-Semitism are quick to recognize the advenient character of such anti-Semitism as is fanned by propaganda. It is clearly apparent when we hear individuals who have Jewish friends, and are members of groups in which Jews are included, give voice nevertheless to anti-Semitic shibboleths. But we rarely recognize the very same character in assent to programs in which we believe—national health insurance, or national housing, for example. The means by which "good" causes are put over are precisely the same as those by which "bad" causes are sold. In either case, the mechanism is pernicious when one considers it from the standpoint of healthy functioning of groups. A friend of mine, for example, who has been working with women's clubs has discovered that the long dependence of these local clubs on the national office of their federation for programs and guidance in policy-making has resulted in a pattern of work in which local problems in the community are never discussed. Moreover, local clubs even fail completely to see the connection between some national policy they endorse and a condition in their own communities which needs remedial action. It is easy to see how, under such conditions, individual creativity is stifled and personalities become empty, rigid, distorted; and the group ceases to be a medium for growth and personal development.

When we survey the relation of our cultural institutions to face-to-face groups, the picture is, alas, no more inspiring, though for a different reason. These institutions—adult-education enterprises, museums, recreational, philanthropic, and business corporations—simply ignore the group. They design their administrative setups as if society were made up of a mass of isolated individuals, with no propensity for forming relationships with others. They make no use of the magnificent educational potentialities which reside in the group, and thus they fall short of discharging their full responsibility to our society, one of whose goals is widespread diffusion of scientific culture and of the amenities and arts associated with a high plane of material living. The American ideal of mass education can never be realized until the unit of administration is the group, not the isolated individual.

What has all this to do with peace and the United Nations? Lack of space in an already overlong letter permits no more than the statement of the propositions upon which an adequate answer would be based. We are talking, of course, of contemporary culture, which does not make of war an ideal value.

1. Where the group is stifled and constricted, the individual is bereft of the experience of liberty. Resistance to regimentation is almost benumbed. Dependence upon authority is practically absolute. Making war for a state in which such conditions prevail becomes a simple matter. Its already mobilized cohorts in factory and community are merely deployed upon the field of battle under banners with aggressive and defensive slogans.

2. Where the group is free, and able with assistance appropriate to modern conditions, to perform its functions; where society, recognizing the paramount significance of those functions, has also devised adequate institutional arrangements for resolving group conflicts by discovery of a higher synthesis—warmaking by the state would be rendered extremely difficult, if not impossible.

3. The reasons for this are three: (a) Such a society would lack the requisite volume of latent resentments, frustrations, fear, hate, self-pity, and ill-will to make it easy for the state to mobilize its citizens behind aggressive slogans. It would have a hard time making defensive ones sound plausible. (Great Britain and the United States did not find warmaking any too easy this last time.) (b) Conflict between such a state and other states would be the signal for the society to search for synthesis, not to respond to a call to arms. (c) The advenient character of war would be clearly perceived by a people whose sense of reality had not been blunted by habitual conformity to the pressures of propagandist tactics.

This means that in searching for global peace our generation faces the ironic paradox that the first step in the direction of a universal goal must be a consideration of the smallest unit of social structure and functioning. It seems to mean that the organization of the United Nations can be built only upon fully functioning "atomic" organizations.

Let me know what you think of all this.

As ever,

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*Maria Rogers* is one of the charter members of the Committee on Autonomous Groups and has been its Secretary since its organization; she is a contributor to *Sociometry* and other professional periodicals.

## EDUCATION IN BARREN COUNTY

E. George Payne

We cannot consider education in Barren County aside from that of the state as a whole. Perhaps it is the backwardness of education in the state as a whole that accounts for the situation in the county. Kentucky, according to a report of Dr. Maurice F. Seay, Director, Bureau of School Service, and Head of the Department of Educational Administration, College of Education, University of Kentucky, made for the Committee for Kentucky places the state near the bottom of the list of the forty-eight states in its educational standards, practices, and program. A few items will indicate just how backward in general the schools are as compared with the nation and other specific states. Of the 17,710 teachers in the state 4,500 or 26 per cent hold emergency certificates and some of these teachers are not even high-school graduates. One fourth of Kentucky's teachers do not meet the lowest legal qualifications for teachers' certificates; Kentucky has no full-time supervisors in seventy-three counties having 9,110 teachers; only three full-time general supervisors are employed by the State Department of Education for the state's 17,710 teachers. The average salary of teachers in Kentucky is \$1,014, in the nation \$1,599, in New York State \$2,697.

Let us take just one other field for illustration, as this will be sufficient to indicate the general status. High-school home-economics classes in the state enroll 12,607 girls, but 62,550 girls should study home economics each year to prepare themselves as homemakers. Moreover, twelve counties with 31,562 homemakers have no opportunity in their schools for training in home economics. High-school trade and industrial classes enroll 2,182 boys in the state to replace some of the 228,033 men and women who make their living in the trades and industries. The average state appropriation per person for vocational education in high schools is nine cents in Kentucky, eighteen cents in the nation, and ninety-seven cents in New Hampshire. Finally, high-school vocational agriculture classes in the state provide education to 9,143 boys out of a needed 34,734 to fit them as new farm operators, and sixteen counties with 148,063 people living on the farms have no opportunity in their schools for training in agriculture.

These few items from the state program of education will indicate in general the status in Barren County, but noteworthy progress has been made here as elsewhere in the country. Twenty-five years ago there was

no school consolidation in the county and there was no high school outside of Glasgow and one or two other urban communities. Today high-school education is within reach of every child in the county, graded schools are in part consolidated, and busses transport children to their schools. The county, therefore, provides education, both elementary and secondary, for all its youth. Moreover, twenty-five years ago the amount provided by the state for education in Barren County was less than five dollars per pupil of school age. Today the state appropriates twenty-five dollars per pupil of school age and the county assesses seventy-five cents on the hundred-dollar value of property in the county as local taxation for the support of the schools. The county is moving toward adequate support of its educational program.

The weakness of the educational program of the county lies not so much in the financial support as in the character of the program provided. In the quarter of a century just ending there has been no fundamental change in the character of the education nor in the methods of instruction in the county. In a word, the program is one of book study and recitation on the materials in the books memorized, and the materials generally bear little relation to the needs of pupils in school. Obviously the teaching of reading, writing, and the essentials of computation which is done now as it has been done throughout the history of education in the county is essential, but aside from these bare minimals other subject matter included in the course of study might for the most part be omitted without harm to the students.

Moreover, the secondary instruction has value, so far as it has value at all, only for those youths who might wish to enter college and ultimately the learned professions, into which not one per cent of them enter or should enter. It is no surprise, therefore, that only 2.5 per cent of the children enrolled complete high school, and that of the 114,123 children enrolled in the first grade only 14,884 graduate from high school. Perhaps these statistics show greater wisdom on the part of youth for whom this education is provided than it does on the part of the educators and citizens of the state who provide the program of education for them.

If Barren County, Kentucky, were the only community in the nation that failed to adjust its educational program to the needs of its youth, I would not be justified in taking the time of our readers to consider the facts presented, but the same weaknesses appear in the education of the country as a whole to a greater or less degree. Therefore, what I am saying about this county has general application.

Education has value only as it contributes to the personal growth of the participants and the changes for the better in the practices of the community that the education serves. We might state this another way. The education has value for the individual only as it increases his capacity and desire for more effective living, as a farmer, laborer, or professional worker, and as a citizen in the community where he chooses to make his permanent home. Education must be judged also by its value in improving the life and social welfare of the community that provides it.

This whole discussion, therefore, leads to one conclusion; namely, that the schools of the nation and Barren County must readjust their program by providing a combination of work and study of the problems that come within the activity area of youth to the end that youth as it comes to adulthood can live better, can contribute more to the welfare of others, and can serve better the interests of the state, the nation, and the world. Moreover, the schools must serve the community by improving the health of the people, by increasing the production of the essentials of social welfare, by increasing the standards of living in all its essentials. Education must serve humanity in the essentials of its well-being. In this sense education in the schools of Barren County has failed in its function and the work which the schools ought to do has been performed by other social agencies, so far as it has been performed at all.

### BOOK REVIEW

*Social Institutions*, by HARRY ELMER BARNES. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1946, 927 pages.

Here is a text richly documented and interestingly written. The division of the book is logical and sociologically sound. Mr. Barnes begins with a discussion of the foundations and framework of social institutions and then continues with a systematic appraisal of our institutional equipment.

For the teacher who is looking for a text for a course on social institutions, he will find *Social Institutions* one that adequately covers the subject and one, because of its arrangement, that is easy to teach. Students as well as laymen will find it stimulating and provocative reading.

The theory of cultural lag upon which Mr. Barnes postulates the cause of practically all institutional maladjustment and inefficiency may not seem adequate but he builds up a convincing case for his premise.

An extensive and up-to-date bibliography at the back of the book covering each chapter cites additional reading for further research.

There is a striking similarity between this book and *The American Way of Life* by Barnes and Ruedi, and *Society in Transition* by Barnes. In fact, for someone who has read all three, a likely comment on reading the last of the series might very well be: "This is where I came in." The student or teacher looking for a descriptive analysis of our institutional patterns would do well to examine all three and pick the one that best meets his needs.



